

INDIA'S GREAT PROJECT

THERE are probably many interesting things to write about the progress of India in becoming what, according to Western standards, would be termed a "modern nation." We have at hand a year book of statistics reporting on various phases of the Indian economy and social life, with figures on exports and imports, and advancing industrialization. However, the most dramatic thing of all about India of today, so far as we can see, is the philosophic transformation that is going on.

To explain: India is the motherland of the world's religions. Practically every religious idea worth talking about has its philosophic original somewhere in the teachings of India's sages. There is evidence that the Orphic mysteries of Greece came from India; that the system taught by Pythagoras, Plato, and the Neoplatonists had an Indian inspiration. It has been closely argued that the teachings of Jesus are anticipated and paralleled in Buddhism, and that the religious communities in which Jesus obtained his education were originally organized under Buddhist influence. Even today, the revival in the West of mystical Christianity has been accompanied by large infusions of Indian thought. Further, Western philosophers since Schopenhauer, including the American Transcendentalists, have gained in breadth of mind by the study of Eastern scriptures.

Meanwhile, the great complaint of Western thinkers concerning the East has been the charge that the East—or India—is *static* in the forms of her religious beliefs. Moreover, the social systems described in India's ancient scriptures are as much taken for granted as the Himalayan ranges. They are simply there, supplying the conditions of life, and remain unquestioned. (Western religions, of course, are no better. Socially-minded Christians have given great popularity to the passage in the

Bible about Jesus whipping the money-changers from the temple, but this can hardly be construed as "social criticism" in the modern sense.) In any case, East or West, social criticism is more than condemnation of "abuses": it is logical inquiry into the nature of political authority in human and social relationships. The idea of the social contract is a distinctly modern idea.

The stratification of class in the caste system in India was no more questioned by Indian religious teachings than the class divisions of Europe were questioned by the medieval philosophers. While the idea of caste, as explained in Indian thought, is far more *rational* than the corresponding divisions in Europe, in neither case were the assumptions challenged. Just because Western religion was so clearly anti-rational, perhaps, the West was the first to challenge the traditional arrangements of society—the idea of *Karma*, or retributive justice, as the reason behind the birth of a man in an unfortunate caste, makes a lot more sense than the unamplified "will of God." The West broke violently with the traditional social system of Europe, and at the same time broke the power of the traditional religious system. The modern "secular state" emerged as a wholly rational version of the distribution of political power and social responsibility. Hundreds of years have passed since this great revolution of the West, and the idea that men have both the right and the capacity to define the political relationships under which they will live is almost a traditional idea in Western culture. The question, now, is whether or not the familiar agnostic philosophy of the West will be able to give continuous support to a free culture.

Meanwhile, in the East, India seems to have undertaken the great project of formulating socio-political philosophy *without* abandoning her

religious tradition. From a long-term historical viewpoint, this may be the most exciting thing to happen in the twentieth century.

It was Gandhi who planted the seed for this revolutionary change. It was Gandhi who began the transformation of India's traditional communities into what Westerners are in the habit of calling *intentional* communities. In other revolutions, the traditional social forms have been hated and destroyed; in India, they are being re-examined and revived. Old ethical teachings are receiving new content of immediate application. This is an enormous subject which can have only the sketchiest treatment here. However, to set the general situation and to convey the state of many Indians, we quote from an American Congressman, Emanuel Celler, who recently returned from a visit to India. The following is from an article by Mr. Celler which appears in *Eastern World* (London) for July:

If I were to be limited to one word descriptive of India, I would choose "vibrant." This, in the main, springs from the marriage of the ancient with the new. If we are to understand India at all, we must understand how the patience of antiquity mingles with the restlessness of our own age, like the slow lumbering of the water buffaloes through the streets of Indian cities while automobiles rush past. Or, perhaps, this marriage is even clearer when we understand that the village spinning wheel is as important to the development of India as is the irrigation project, both of which are significant parts of India's five-year plan.

India, full of color, full of movement, alive with men and women of searching, sensitive minds, bears a gruesome burden: hunger. India, only at the beginning of industrialization, must maintain and sustain two and a half times the population of the United States in a country one half the size. There is no hiding from the ugliness of hunger.

Those who remember the terrible famine which overtook India a few years ago will realize that vast numbers of Indians live literally on the edge of starvation. The specter of hunger is always in the wings of Indian affairs, and to this ever-present problem have suddenly been added

the complicated responsibilities of self-government for an enormous population.

In the article quoted above, Mr. Celler goes on to give his impressions of Indian opinion. We cite another passage to illustrate the acute self-consciousness of Indian attitudes toward current events, involving sharp analysis of the psychological effects of American policies:

I would like to dwell for a moment on what the Indian leaders told me. A good part of every discussion was devoted to American-Indian relations. That they have deteriorated steadily and visibly for the past year cannot be denied. It pleased me that the Indians with whom I spoke refused to indulge in noncommittal comment. In his directness, the Indian spares neither his own country, nor ours . . . mostly, of course, ours.

These are the views, as nearly as I can summarize them:

1. The United States is naïve.
2. The United States is frightened out of all proportion of the Soviet threat.
3. That a country like the United States, with its wealth and power, is unbecomingly permitting itself to be manipulated by not only the colonial powers, but by a country like South Korea.
4. That by insisting upon labelling all aid as anti-Communist, the United States has convinced the recipients that they are being used merely as pawns in the East-West cold war. Would the United States extend aid to help less fortunate countries were there no Communist threat? They doubt it.
5. That visiting Americans insist that receiving Governments bow low in praise and gratitude for the aid given. Such an attitude, they maintain, robs the receiver of his pride and the giver of his grace. How would you like to be the poor nephew being constantly reminded by the rich uncle that he is sending him through school?
6. The United States is losing fast its civil liberties at home, and we are behaving like trapped animals in a cage held tight by Senator McCarthy.
7. That we are pushing China further into the bosom of the Soviet Union by our refusal to recognize her. Recognition is not approval, but the acknowledgement of the existence of a government which is conducting the affairs of that state.

These are the views I heard over and over again, whether in Bombay, Agra, Jaipur, Delhi or Calcutta. For the sheer fun of it I would recite them every time some Indian began, "Now Mr. Congressman, tell me

why the United States. . . ." This would start them laughing, but they held fast to their views, . . .

So much for India's friendly criticisms of the United States. Her primary problem is a domestic problem—hunger, and therefore, agriculture and land. While India is endeavoring to industrialize in some measure after the example of Western nations, there is a growing feeling among Indians attentive to Gandhi's ideas that a blanket imitation of the West would be disastrous for India. The fact is that there is striking correspondence between advanced social thought in the West and the immediate objectives of Gandhian groups in India. If a Westerner speaks of decentralization, the Gandhian will point to the traditional *panchayat* (elders) government of Indian villages. In the All-India Congress Committee *Economic Review* for June 1, S. N. Agarwal writes:

Democracy in the West today suffers from a multitude of sins. It is too centralised and too mechanised. India can show a much better way to the Western world by evolving a new model of decentralised and composite democracy in conformity with her ancient heritage. "True democracy," observed Gandhiji, "could not be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre: it had to be worked from below by the people of every village."

The success of economic planning under a democratic set-up would largely depend on the establishment of village panchayats in India on firm and healthy foundations. The reports and recommendations of the Panchayat Committee of the Congress will, therefore, be awaited by the country with great interest and even anxiety.

The name given by Gandhians to their social ideal is *Sarvodaya*, which has this meaning:

Sarvodaya stands for a just social order where there will be no exploitation, no poverty, no economic inequality. And economic equality is the cornerstone of a just social order. If you fail to prevent concentration of capital whether in the hands of a few or of a group or of the State, your haven of a just social order falls to the ground. Whoever amasses riches, amasses them by exploiting labor or by using labor-saving machines. Peasants who cultivate their lands themselves earn enough to satisfy their natural wants, but never have much to spare.

A social order, therefore, that means an even deal for all must accept (1) non-dependence on others and therefore (2) productive labor as immutable rules of life.

A leading figure in the *Sarvodaya* movement is Vinoba Bhave, who has organized the campaign for the giving of land to the landless peasants. Vinoba, without "imitating" Gandhi as a leader, has become in fact the leader of the Gandhian movement in very practical terms. He is a conscious social philosopher. In a recent issue of *Sarvodaya*, a Gandhian magazine, Vinoba is quoted as saying:

Monarchy is gone; gone too is aristocracy; democracy is in the process of liquidation; the stage is now set for the rule of all by all . . . the age is approaching when the truth "one in all and all in one" will rule the world. If we put ourselves on its side, we will share the credit of ushering it in. If not, it will come in spite of us. . . . I appeal to you all to help me in this revolutionary work that I am doing. I want to revolutionize thought, revolutionize the means. The sages say that youth has in him the urge for new creation. Here is a new economic order to fashion, a new world to create. . . .

It should be remembered that these are more than pious exhortations and slogans. Vinoba has been tramping all over India, persuading the landholders to give their land to the peasants. This is a *peaceful* revolution. Of its effect, S. N. Agarwal writes in the A.I.C.C. *Economic Review*:

Bhoodan Yajna [gift of land] has eminently succeeded in creating a healthy and favorable atmosphere for the introduction of far-reaching land reforms in the country, it has demonstrated to the world that the land problem could be effectively solved through peaceful methods. . . . in thickly populated countries like India, small-scale and intensive farming is the only correct solution of our economic problems. It is of course, necessary that the small farmers should be provided with the requisite facilities of good seed, manures, irrigation, and cooperative marketing. Mechanization in Indian agriculture should be undertaken with great care and discrimination. Excessive use of tractors and other machines would be both uneconomic and inhuman in a country like ours where the basic national problem is that of providing gainful employment to the millions of our people. . . .

It must be fully realized by all of us that our democracy cannot succeed as a political ideal unless it is achieved as an economic ideal. Political freedom without social and economic freedom would remain a vacant dream. Land is a gift of Nature; it can neither be increased nor decreased by man. Its redistribution on a more equitable basis is, therefore, of paramount importance and land reforms should therefore receive the highest priority. . . .

Vinoba addresses the people of India in the terms of their traditional religion. He works with a minimum of organization. Explaining how much land had been given without special appeal to the donors, he said:

Without imposed discipline, it is surprising how we could collect 25 lakh acres of land. {A *lakh* is 100,000.} This means that the movement has entered the hearts of 2 lakh people and it is a very important thing. Is it possible to bring out a disciplined society? We want a society in which there should be self-discipline, there should not be indiscipline. If we could do that it will be a great thing and I will be very happy. As far as I know, there is no self-disciplined society in the world at present.

There is a great idea here—the accomplishment of equality without compulsion. How will the gains of land-giving be maintained and continued without administration or compulsion? Vinoba makes a parable out of the *Bhagavad-Gita* for his answer:

The workers say that we are already doing good work which cannot be given up. But the *Gita* says that it is not easy to decide what is the best for us. There is a limit to our capacity to think as to what is our duty. Shri Krishna fought with arms; he was an excellent warrior. But he too gave up arms at a certain stage. He accompanied the Pandavas to the battlefield unarmed. This does not mean that he gave up *Karma-Yoga* [the performance of duty through action]; he in fact took it forward. . . .

Bhoodan Yajna is only a beginning. The administration has to be changed by this movement. There are people who think we should take the reins of Government in our hands. But I say there is no such need. If the administration works according to our wish, that is sufficient. . . . This movement has had some effect. We have begun to think about *Khadi* [hand-spun and hand-woven cloth], village industries, unemployment and under-employment. It

is a result of Bhoodan Yajna. It is possible to keep control over administration while remaining out of it. This can be done with the help of people's power [*Jan-Shakti*]. I think that instead of going to the Parliament, if I do this work during all the 12 months its results will not be less than what I will be able to achieve in Parliament. It is not necessary for Kripalaniji to take up Bhoodan Yajna. If he is able to stimulate his party-men to take this work, it will have good effect on politics. Similarly Congressmen should also take up this work. This will change the politics into people's policy.

Vinoba began an address before a conference on Sarvodaya and Bhoodan by saying:

After Bapu's [Gandhi's] *Nirwan*, we are all assembled . . . for the first time. Today after six years we are all again meeting here. . . . There are persons here who say that at time of difficulties we will all be one and will face them together. But I ask whether it is necessary for mutual love that some foreign trouble must come! In this country there are already so many troubles in the shape of casteism, provincialism, etc. Are these not sufficient? Is any more trouble necessary? . . .

Now, as the atmosphere is favorable, we should think of these programs along with Bhoodan. We should also pay attention to the work necessary for its completion. There is no ownership of land. It is a free gift of nature. Everybody should have the right to have land. Whatever wealth one has, one should not use it without giving a part of it. We should not eat without first giving a part of the food. Land is not a source of production alone; it is a source of worshipping God. It is more substantial to work on the land than to perform penance. It is not so painful if the Harijans {untouchables} are not allowed to enter the temples in Kashi, it is more sad if they are not permitted to work on the land. The worship of God, that is, the service of land, must not be hindered. As it is unnecessary to feel ashamed in demanding water to drink, likewise one who is prepared to work on land should not be ashamed of demanding a piece of land. . . .

The head of the Indian State, Prime Minister Nehru, also came to this meeting, at the invitation of Vinoba. Nehru said that he came to learn, not to "guide anybody." The candor of his remarks should impress those more used to Western political utterances:

We [Nehru said] have developed the habit of repeating high principles, whether we follow them or not. The big countries talk in such a manner as if power is the greatest thing in the world. The way of worshipping power alone, and the non-violent way of Mahatma Gandhi are two separate paths. There are all sorts of difficulties in our way. People have their independent opinions, but I have no doubt that the general opinion in our country tends toward Gandhiji. . . .

The Vice President of India, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, also attended the gathering. His contribution is especially interesting since he speaks as a high authority on Indian philosophy and religion. The people of India have long been accused by the West of longing for escape from bondage to earthly life. They are called "passive" and "other-worldly." There may be some truth in this, but Radhakrishnan brings the revolutionary spirit even to the doctrine of *Nirvana*:

There are many people who think that in our country we want salvation or *mukti*, and every individual high or low, caste or outcast, has the liberty to attain Nirvana. But Nirvana does not mean liberation from the body. One of the Upanishads tells you: . . . Life eternal means an all-around awakening, a Sarvodaya, so to say, of the powers of the human being. . . . When the Yoga Sutra Acharya tells us how we are to attain Sarnadhi, the first condition he puts is, "Develop your physique." He points out: "Physical prowess consists in the development of beauty, of radiance, of strength, of invulnerability." . . . Bhoodan, in trying to bring about an economic, agrarian revolution by enabling all the citizens who are engaged in agriculture to share some land which they can use for their purposes, is attempting to provide for this very essential basis for any other kind of development.

Unlike other revolutionaries—the revolutionaries of the Western tradition—Radhakrishnan has no scapegoats to blame for India's sufferings:

And what does our social Dharma [duty] say? Dharma is that which binds society together, or Adharma is that which breaks society asunder. Anything which makes for the consolidation of society is Dharma; anything which makes for the disintegration of society is Adharma. If in this human history of ours we have suffered many defeats,

may I say that it is not suffering imposed on an innocent being; it is not a crucifixion that we have had; we have suffered for the sins we have committed.

There is such a thing as the logic of history. The world is bound by the law of Karma. Nations rise or fall according to their great qualities or their opposite. Therefore I ask I plead with you, that if you are truly religious, if you are truly ethical, if you are believers in social morality, then practices like these [caste distinctions, untouchability] will have to be eliminated. They bring this whole country and our religion into disgrace. No one can get up and say that these are the things which are furnished by our religions.

Dr. Radhakrishnan quoted Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Islamic and Christian teachings to show that all these great religions teach that "the Divine is stationed as a possibility in every human being," and he urged that the agrarian revolution would help to erase false distinctions among human beings.

A new social philosophy and religion is being born in India, brought into being by men who are both statesmen and philosophers and teachers as well as leaders of the people. The East has learned much from the West. Most of all, it has learned the importance of freedom. It may soon be time for the West to start learning from the East.

REVIEW
DWIGHT MACDONALD IN THE
REPORTER

A TWO-PART article by Dwight Macdonald in the *Reporter* (June 8 and June 22) may provide some readers with an opportunity for noting the general tone and plan of this publication. Now in its tenth volume, this "fortnightly of facts and ideas" combines an attractive format with a thoughtful editorial policy and contributors whose work is often noticed in these pages. The two *Reporter* issues at hand feature familiar names: one of the staff writers is Marya Mannes, whose remarkable "after-death" novel, *Message from a Stranger*, we reviewed in MANAS some two years ago, and in the *Reporter* for June 8, Miss Mannes takes note of the thought-provoking quality of the writing of David Davidson, whose *Steeper Cliff* was here rated at the top of the list of World War II novels. Anthony West, a versatile *New Yorker* contributor, is represented in the June 22 number by an excellent article, "Guilty as Charged—and Proud of It."

Dwight Macdonald's contribution is entitled, "The Lie-Detector Era." Mr. Macdonald finds the use of polygraph tests in "loyalty questionings" a symbol of our times as ominous as it is revealing. This article is both a competent recital of facts and a psychological essay, combined with the usual Macdonald verve. Thesis: Ours is the "age of science" near to running amuck; average citizens in Government employ are strapped to machines in response to some rumor about their once having Communist acquaintances—or having attended a lawn party aimed to support the Spanish loyalist cause in the 1930's.

The case histories collected by Macdonald speak for themselves in damning "lie-detecting," showing that here, as with atomic bombs, politicians of our time are easily forgetting the philosophy of inviolable individual conscience upon which the American Constitution was theoretically based. Interestingly enough, some

sort of "official" recognition of the inappropriateness of the use of lie-detectors in ideological matters comes from West Germany, where a high Federal court ruled that lie-detector findings were *not proper evidence*. Perhaps the Germans, having had experience with "scientific" control of political ideas by means of concentration camps, etc., can more easily detect that the polygraph trend is not as innocuous as it seems. Macdonald points out that "the reason given [by the German court] was not that such evidence is scientifically unacceptable but that the test was a violation of basic human rights. Specifically, it was a violation of the first article of the Bonn Constitution: 'The dignity of man is inviolable. It is the duty of all state organs to respect and protect it.' The judges held that the lie-detector reduced the defendant to the level of an object and so deprived him of the right to be a fully active 'participant' in his trial." Macdonald continues:

Whether this is a fair indictment or not—and it should be noted that in American trials it is often the defendant who demands the polygraph, and also that the instrument has cleared the innocent as well as trapped the guilty—it is a typical European reaction. After listing the scientific objections to the lie detectors, Dr. Pierre Schneider, director of the psychiatric clinic of Lausanne University, concludes: "But the inaccuracy of this method is not the main reason for neglecting it. In our conception of the freedom of man and of his free determination, we think that every subject has the right to tell a lie if he chooses this method of defense. No medical or psychological method can be used against him.

. . . the authorities ought to prove by their methods, which should respect the free will of the subject, falsity or truth."

In America, however, we have three "hush-hush defense agencies," the Operations Research Office, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency, all tramping the polygraph trail—screening Atomic Energy Commission personnel *twice a year* by "runs" on the machine. The psychological effects are what concern Macdonald, especially as described by an

intelligent young woman who had been made one of the subjects:

"Looking back on it," Miss Doe has said, "it's not the results of the test I object to—I must have passed with flying colors, since I got top-secret clearance—but the humiliation of being treated as a suspected liar and criminal."

Another reaction is presented in more detail from an anonymous source:

One of the questions on the list the examiner presented to Mr. Roe was, "Have you ever been sympathetic to Communism?" It caused a good deal of grief to both of them. Mr. Roe explained, or rather tried to—"there was a total lack of sympathy"—that he had studied Marxism in college and consequently found it difficult to answer this with a simple Yes or No. If by "Communism" the examiner meant Marx's doctrines, then he could only say he was sympathetic to some and unsympathetic to others. If the term was to be taken in its Russian context, then he felt obliged to say that he had once felt sympathetic to the Mensheviks but had never been sympathetic to the Bolsheviks. All of this passed over the inquisitor's head with a heavy, sighing sound like wind in the branches of a rain-soaked tree. "I got the impression that he considered anyone who had studied Marx to be *ipso facto* a security risk and also that he personally wanted me to fail."

The results were inconclusive, and Mr. Roe, a rather high-strung type, had to take the test three more times, each time with ambiguous results. After each test, his security officer tried to persuade him to resign quietly, thus avoiding the possible stigma of being fired. The security officer also seemed anxious to save the security division a lot of trouble and possibly to add a scalp to be displayed to inquiring McCarthys later on. Mr. Roe was finally dropped, much to everyone's relief, including his own.

The case histories recited by Macdonald seem sufficiently impressive to call for further quotation. Another subject was summoned to interviews with a security officer who had "heard" that "derogatory information" concerning the former had been received. The security officer finally persuaded him to accept the embrace of the complicated machinery and he passed the test with no "difficulty"—yet writes vehemently:

As I thought it all over later, I felt more and more angry and humiliated. In urging me to take the test, the security officer had implied it would make his own task easier, would give him—as well as me—protection in case the matter were raised again. So I'd done it "for the good of the service." But now I wish I hadn't. I felt rotten about it. The next day my boss greeted me as if I had won the Olympic games: "I just had a call from the security chief. He wants me to congratulate you. The charges against you have been destroyed and a commendation has been put into your file!"

I've never been so sickened. Congratulations for what? I never heard a word about the business again. Months later, after some investigating of my own, I concluded that the accusation had probably been lodged by a subordinate, a rather pathetic alcoholic, who had a grudge against me about a matter of discipline—but I had lost my respect both for the Department and for myself. I believe that when you go through the motions of the lie test you lose your usefulness as a public servant because you have submitted to something no gentleman can tolerate: You have let a machine verify your word of honor. Whether you are found guilty or not, your career in government is over—mine was, anyway—on the day you sit down and hold hands with the gadget.

"The Lie Detector Era" is worth reading in its totality, especially by those who appreciated Macdonald's "Responsibility of Peoples." His concluding paragraph sums up:

Praising the polygraph, an oldtime police sergeant recently said: "I used to take the boys into the back room and use my club. The lie detector is better. It's a lot easier, and it don't leave marks." Except on the spirits of a good many government employees, and except on the fabric of American democracy.

COMMENTARY

INDIA AND AMERICA

THE All India Congress Committee's *Economic Review* for June I contains an article by G. L. Mehta, Indian Ambassador to the United States, in which the basis for friendly relations between the two countries is clearly set forth. While India, as the Ambassador points out, "is an ancient land with a historic tradition that goes back to 3,000 years before Christ," in modern industrial and economic terms, India is in the initial stages of her development.

Trade relations between India and the United States have been growing rapidly. It may come as a surprise to readers to learn that India supplies about 40 per cent of the total amount of manganese used by the American steel industry. For this and many other reasons, a widening future of economic cooperation is on the horizon. The promise of cultural accord is equally great, since many Indians are fully cognizant of the contribution to world civilization made by the United States. Therefore, Ambassador Mehta's account of the sources of disagreement between the two countries becomes of special interest. He writes:

The differences in the policies of the United States and India arise mainly from the fact that whereas to the U.S. the fight against Communism is the supreme issue to which all other problems should be subordinated, *India holds that the real enemies of mankind are economic and social evils such as poverty and hunger, disease, racial discrimination, domination and exploitation of weaker peoples by the powerful of the world.*

These problems would confront us even if the teachings of Karl Marx had not influenced Lenin and even though MaoTse-Tung had not been the ruler of China. . . . In other words, the theory and practice of Communism have to be studied as a historical process rather than as a malignant cancer to be merely exterminated. . . .

It is difficult to find evidence of guile in this candid statement. Turning to questions of national temperament and character, Mr. Mehta continues:

The worst impediment in the way of full understanding and cooperation between our two countries is . . . not any clash of interests nor any difference in ideologies; not any subtleties of Oriental psychology and wiles of Occidental diplomacy, but

plain lack of patience and tolerance. We are both informal, friendly, and hospitable, but also apt to be sensitive. But there are sharp differences, too. The American mind is essentially an engineering mind: it is positive, constructive, and believes in continuous experiment, innovation and action. The Indian mind is more contemplative, it is reflective, somewhat cautious, slow in tempo, believing in eternity. . . . There are radical differences in our two countries and we have divergent traditions and customs. Both our peoples would benefit if each could imbibe some of the traits of the other. . . .

Relationship between nations is a sensitive plant, never more so than today when there is frequently a tendency to beat any difference of opinion as an act of defiance. . . . What will maintain and promote good friendship between our two countries is not gifts of money nor aid of arms, but a sense of equality of status and a sharing of common objectives.

It is only natural that Indo-American relations should be subject to all the strains and stresses which characterize relations between two free, independent and friendly countries. But so long as the spirit of idealism which inspired your founding fathers and your great leaders guides you, and so long as we are true to our cultural heritage and our faith in democratic values, we have nothing to fear.

Americans are fortunate that India has this quality of representation in the United States.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves NOTES IN PASSING

WE have a letter offering some interesting thoughts on themes pursued in "Fratricide Among Educators" (April 21) and its follow-ups in this column. Since we had hoped that a number of our subscribers would contribute on the general subject of educational controversy, perhaps this letter will serve to keep things going:

Editors of *MANAS*: I appreciated what you said about teachers in "Fratricide Among Educators," since I too have been criticising education as practiced, but have not been interested enough to submit myself to the discipline of engaging in teaching.

There are, I think, two problems.

(1) We aren't clear as to what education is for. In this country at least, colleges were established principally to educate men to be ministers of the Gospel, and the pattern for this education was provided by the medieval setup. Also, free public schools were established to provide an "informed citizenry with knowledge to be able to read the *Bible*. Now, our educational needs are other, but what? We have two types of high schools, academic and trade. However, the *status* is with the academic course and there are now many students "taking" the academic course who will never enter college because of lack of ability or finances.

(2) The second problem is "compulsory" education!!! How often we've used the word before being struck by its irony. You can lead a child to school, but you can't *compel* him to learn! But high schools have a large number of pupils who are there only because the law requires it, and school is better than going to a reformatory. But what else could these youngsters do? Labor doesn't want them, and cries "exploitation." For many, there is nothing but idleness at home. But it means that much "teaching" is merely custodial care, sort of "baby-sitting" to keep the teen-agers off the streets until the law permits them to go to work. Perhaps we discarded too much when we became too progressive for the apprentice system. I wish I had statistics on the manpower and money now expended on attendance officers and courts dealing with children who *don't want to go to*

school and who are therefore pretty impervious to being educated.

We probably sound like the proud owners of a one-track mind, but it is impossible not to point out that Robert Hutchins' *The Higher Learning* gives percipient attention to the questions raised. Hutchins feels that a considerable amount of clarification would result from separating those who are presently capable of undertaking a "truly liberal education" from those who are just going through the motions because of social pressure. This does not mean, incidentally, that Hutchins necessarily believes that some people can benefit from liberal education and others cannot—only that the primary qualification for intensive liberal arts work should be an indwelling *desire*. This, as the rather phenomenal success of many adult education programs has demonstrated, can develop at any period during a person's life. Philosophical training and cultural education may be something like learning to play the piano; youngsters forced against their natural inclinations can acquire a negative conditioning which makes later appreciation of great literature virtually impossible.

Then, too, there is the oft-mentioned fact of the modern child's long separation from the performance of useful work in a wealthy "leisure society." Apprenticeship, provided it is not simply on an assembly line, would probably be a rather wonderful thing in many cases, nor is the specter of body- and soul-crushing child labor for long hours involved, since our present standards have moved so far in the other direction that exploitation of teen-age labor would today be practically impossible.

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For parents who are on the lookout for worth-while literature for teen-agers, we call attention to another book written by Phyllis Whitney, whose *Willow Hill* was discussed here in *MANAS* (April, 1953) . Miss Whitney has attempted a very difficult thing in her novels, with rather surprising success: She writes about

cultural and social problems as they relate to the lives of young people, and she does so without too much oversimplification and without sentimentality. *A Long Time Coming*, which discusses migrant labor social relations in an otherwise wealthy town, doesn't say anything which is apt to be new to children of MANAS readers, but it does tell the story of social interdependence so well that any youngster reading it is bound to have his own partly formed constructive convictions strengthened. Here is part of the publisher's advertisement.

This is the story of a young girl and her problems set against the backdrop of a community divided against itself.

Tension and ill feeling lie close beneath the surface in Leola, a Midwestern town. Migrant workers employed by the town's only big industry, the growing and canning of corn, operated by the Allard Company, are both the base of its prosperity and the object of the townspeople's resentment. Hated by some, feared by others, suspected by many of unsolved crimes, the migrants reciprocate in mistrust and sullen anger.

Into this confused and explosive atmosphere comes Christie Allard, the eighteen-year-old daughter of the plant's absentee owner. Raised in the distant city, she has had no contact with the town, or interest in its problems. Though her visit is intended as a quiet retreat to sort out her own personal problems, she is shortly engulfed in the conflicting attitudes and efforts of her aunt, Miss Amelia Allard; of a surprising young minister, Alan Bennett; of a social worker, Marge Molloy; and of Tom Webb, an outspoken reporter.

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Another subscriber, recalling our discussion of the "God clause" in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, has mailed us a copy of a release issued by the American Humanist Association of Yellow Springs, Ohio, dated July 17. It seems that there is now a considerable amount of agitation for religious propaganda by way of slogans on postage stamps. In justification for this idea it is noted that we have long had "In God We Trust" on U.S. coins. But, according to the American Humanist Association, an extension of this

practice is not a good idea. Most readers will probably endorse the following sentiments:

While the particular phrase "In God We Trust," appearing on the new stamp may be so general in nature as to be deemed by some as a recognition of no particular sect, yet, it is an infringement of the principle of religious freedom since that freedom includes the freedom to have *no* religious belief or to have a religious belief that excludes supernatural intervention. This rejection of supernaturalism represents not only the humanist view, but that of many other liberal religions, not only in the United States, but elsewhere in the world.

These liberal groups, which are represented among the citizenry of the United States, are just as much entitled to religious freedom as any others, even though the latter may have more adherents.

The fact that the phrase "In God We Trust" has appeared on coins for many years is not deemed an adequate reason for extending the practice to stamps. There does not seem to be any movement on foot to introduce the slogans of various religious groups on our coins, but the same cannot be said of stamps. This is no doubt due to the greater ease of issuance of new stamps as distinguished from issuance of new coins, since a stamp is used but once, whereas coins remain in use for many years.

Already there are movements on foot to issue stamps in the near future: (a) For a special stamp to celebrate the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches, (b) A stamp to honor Phillips Brooks, author of the hymn "O Little Town of Bethlehem"; (c) A Christmas tree stamp; (d) A Jewish Synagogue Tercentenary stamp; and (e) A stamp to honor the Virgin Mary.

Whatever may be thought of the phrase "In God We Trust" on the 3-cent stamp and the 8-cent stamp, there can be little doubt that the proposals last mentioned are at least in part infringements on the separation of church and state, on the separation of church and state, since stamps are issued by the Government to entitle the purchase to a vital Governmental service, that is the use of the mails and no one should as a prerequisite to such service be required to purchase a stamp bearing phraseology which is slanted toward particular religious dogmas or beliefs.

FRONTIERS Education in Prison

[The writer of this article has a job in the German prison system and has previously contributed to MANAS letters and articles concerning prison problems. As he says, "I have been in jail myself for nine years (as a political prisoner), and have been a jailer now for another six years, so I can say I know something of the problem." . . . Perhaps after reading this discussion, some reader with psychological interests may be moved to defend psychological procedures and the use of the Rohrschach test, under criticism here.]

THE German prison system is rather rigid, but there have been people with imagination working in it who managed to accomplish worthwhile things. One such man was the president of the Berlin Prison Administration, Ernst Scheidges, now retired, and on very bad terms with his former superiors. While he was in active service, he established several "camps" where Berlin convicts, especially young ones, were sent and where a really educational work was performed. (Nearly all these camps have since been closed.)

I will tell you about one of them that ended when Berlin was split in two by the political wrangles, so that the camp, situated in the Soviet Zone, could no longer be maintained. This camp was run by an old guard by the name of Cauer, who had had no training in psychology; in fact, he had scarcely any education at all, and it was not always easy to read through the bad spellings of his scanty reports. But he was a living example of what I have always felt to be true—psychological training means very little when compared with common sense and a good human heart.

About fifty boys were at that camp, working in agriculture. They were sent out from the Juvenile Prison in Berlin, with a railway trip of about one hour and at least another two hours on foot. The boys were allowed weekend leave every four weeks, but only after having been in the camp for a month.

One day a boy came to Cauer and said, very excitedly: "Sir, my father has come back from Russia, where he was a POW. It is six years since I have seen him. May I go on leave next Saturday?" Cauer had strict orders not to let any boy go until he had been in the camp for four weeks, and this one had arrived only three days before. He hesitated, then said, "You may go to see your father. But be back Monday morning on time." The boy was happy and was back on time. "If I had refused," Cauer explained to me, "he would have gone anyhow, but not come back. As a prison officer, I have failed for not having observed a strict order. But as a man, I think I have done my duty."

Over a period of several years, Cauer never sent a boy back to the prison for bad behaviour or laziness. "I think I educate them better myself," was his principle.

Just as a businessman cannot make money without risking money, so education cannot be carried on without an element of hazard. If you lock all the boys up in cells, you will never lose a boy, but neither will you educate any one, since education requires a certain amount of mutual confidence. So, one morning, a boy left Cauer's camp. Cauer took his bicycle and hurried to the station by a path the boy did not know. He was there when the boy arrived. They sat on the bench for an hour while Cauer explained to the boy that it would be much better for his own interests to serve his term and then go home with clear papers. The boy nodded sadly, and said, "But now you will certainly send me back to the prison?"

"No," said Cauer, "I will not. If you promise to do well from now on, you may stay in the camp. You go back, now, the way you have come. I have things to do in town. I will come later." Cauer followed him with his bicycle, but at a distance, so that the boy felt that he went back of his own will. He never ran away again.

When the mail came, Cauer used to sit on a bench, smoking his pipe, but attentively watching

the boys who were reading their letters. When he noticed one who was out under the chestnut trees, he would call him and say:

"No letter?"

"No, Sir, I do not know what has happened. I have had no news for weeks. Somebody must be sick at home."

"Look here, my boy, I know what you are thinking now. Please don't do it. It would bring you much harm. Give me the address of your mother. I shall go in to Berlin tomorrow and have a look; then I will tell you about it."

The boys all knew that he would help them as much as he could.

Once, after two days in camp, a boy said to him, "Sir, I am really not able to do this sort of heavy work. You know that food is very scarce in Berlin; I am simply too weak."

"Certainly," said Cauer, "I believe you. I will give you other work for which you are strong enough." Next day he set the boy peeling potatoes in a room next to the kitchen, quite alone. The boy peeled potatoes for two days. By that time he was very bored and came to Cauer: "Sir, I think I should try once more to work in the field together with the other boys. Please let me try!"

This was Cauer's method: he did not punish but tried to convince them that it would be better from their point of view to do what he said.

A boy whom I had known in the prison said to me after he had been in the camp for several months: "At the beginning it is not easy to understand the spirit of the camp. But once it has caught you, you belong, and this feeling is so strong that you cannot get away from it." And he added: "Anybody who dared to touch Mr. Cauer would be in trouble with all fifty of the boys!"

Was "education" neglected in this camp? I once read the many letters Cauer had from fathers and mothers of his boys. One woman wrote:

"My boy was lazy. He never helped around the house, and I had to wait on him at the table. Now he has learned how to clean the floor and, what is more, he does it! He helps me in the kitchen, without my asking him. He is completely changed, but for the better. If that is prison, then I should say that many a boy ought to be sent there."

I think that what is important to the prison system is not trained psychologists, but born educators like: Cauer. Let me tell you an experience I once had with a very learned scientific psychologist. When I entered his room, a prisoner named Henry was sitting at a table looking at several white cards with some stains on them. He had been asked to say what the stains suggested to him. (From such tests psychologists hope to get illumination on the emotional life of the prisoner.) I knew Henry pretty well. He had had very little education, but had learned a lot while in jail. He had far too long a sentence, if not for his crime, certainly for his constitution, which was weak. He was a very nervous boy, full of fear.

There he sat, looking down at the cards. He had the idea that anything he said would be important for his future, with the parole board, etc. When the psychologist left the room for a moment, Henry gave me an imploring look. "What would you say, Sir?" he stammered.

I looked at the stains, and said: "This here seems to be a bat. Or perhaps a mole. Well, I do not know." I was glad I was not being tested myself. I am afraid they would have put me on the list of incorrigibles.

Seriously, what benefit will Henry get from such tests? On that occasion, the first and probably only effect was that he was even more intimidated. And if the psychologist, by such artificial means, should learn something about his character, what then? Practically all the prisoners are treated the same way. The tests make no difference. It is as if a doctor makes a thorough

diagnosis of some fifty patients and later gives them all the same medicine.

A man like Cauer, with his simple common sense, will easily find out by conversation what sort of a man Henry is, and without showing him bats or moles on white cards. Further, Cauer would also know what to do with Henry and how to treat him, which is something that the psychologists never find out at all. So I say—fewer trained psychologists, more born educators like Cauer!

But the fact is, there are a few such men. This is why I am more optimistic than your contributor who thinks that only one of a thousand prisoners is able to fight his way through the bad influence of prison life. I know that in my prison there are many more. Perhaps the German system, stupid, as I call it, is in a way better than the American one. Most of the men have individual cells. Bad as this is, at least they are not steadily under the bad influence of professional criminals. The man with strong character has more chance to find a way by himself than the man who is steadily under the degrading influence of people worse than himself.

I think you do a valuable work in giving space to the discussion of the prison system. There are unfortunately but few people in the world who have a real interest in such questions. Could you not try to bring them together? In England they have the Howard League for Penal Reform. We have nothing of the kind here. It would be worth while for those interested to exchange experiences.

GERMAN CORRESPONDENT